

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	EAS.73
Historic Name:	Higgins, Elkanah House
Common Name:	
Address:	75 Massasoit Rd
City/Town:	Eastham
Village/Neighborhood:	
Local No:	08-310
Year Constructed:	c 1783
Architect(s):	
Architectural Style(s):	No style
Use(s):	Agricultural; Single Family Dwelling House
Significance:	Agriculture; Architecture
Area(s):	
Designation(s):	
Building Materials(s):	Roof: Cedar Shingle Wall: Wood Shingle; Wood



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

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FORM B - BUILDING

P1-1

EAS.73

Massachusetts Historical Commission
Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Assessor's
Number

08/310

USGS Quad

Orleans

Area(s)

Form Number

73

Town

Eastham

(neighborhood or village)

75 Massasoit Road

Historic Name

Present Residential

Original "

Year of Construction c. 1783

See Bibliography*

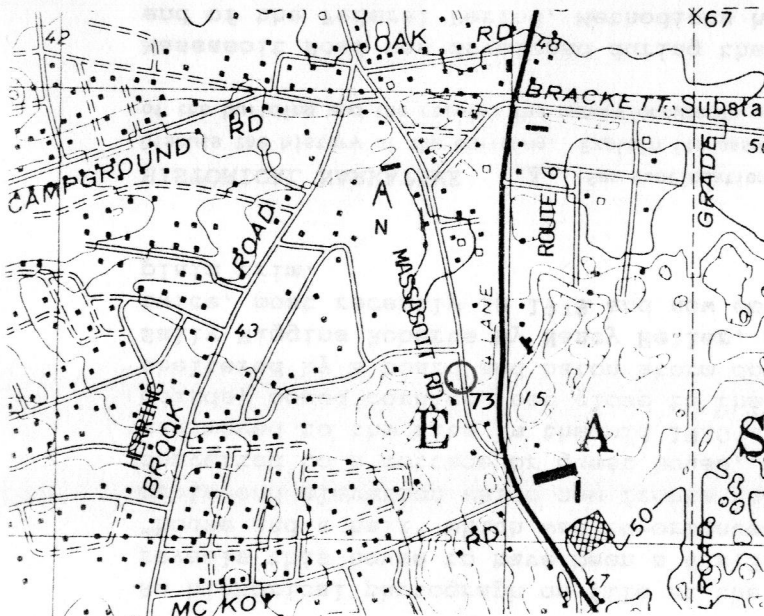
Form Astylistic formerly a
3/4 Cape House Form

Architect/Builder

Exterior Material:



here. Indicate North.



Foundation Not Visible

Wall/Trim Shingles

Roof Cedar Shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

Major Alterations (with dates) moved and reoriented (date unknown)

Condition Good

Moved ___ no X yes Date 20th C.

Acreage 2.3 Acres

Setting Located in a moderately-settled, rural area near the intersection of State Highway.

Recorded by: Dianne L. Siergiej
and Sanford Johnson
Organization: Commonwealth Collaborative

Date: August 1995

RECEIVED

SEP 20 1995

MASS. HIST. COMM.

BUILDING FORM

75 Massasoit Road

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION See continuation sheet.

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

An historical photograph on file at the Eastham Historical Society Archives reveals this house to have been a 4 x 3-bay, center-chimney, 3/4 house or "house and a half" which was re-oriented on the lot. A doorway added to the gable-end elevation which now fronts the street. Part of a small barn, converted to a cottage or guest house, was an ell of a barn in Orleans that was moved to the site in the mid 1950's. Detail is sparse limited to end boards, boxed cornice, set close to the eaves, and an entry on the gable end sheltered by a board and baton storm door. According to a 1994 interview with Sally Higgins Roberts by Nancy Heller, windows in the building were replaced twice, most recently in 1978 and now consist of 9/6, double-hung sash with plain trim.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE X See continuation sheet.

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Massasoit Road was developed during the Federal Period (1775-1830). By the end of the Federal Period, Methodists had established a campground near Campground Road off Massasoit Road. This center for summer religious retreats lasted from 1830 to 1862 when the camp moved to Yarmouth. By 1831, one of Eastham's five schools and many residences were located on Massasoit Road.

It is likely that many of the residents were involved in agriculture. Grains were an early cash crop in Eastham and later, asparagus and turnips became more common. Husbandry and fishing were also important sources of income for Massasoit Road residents. By 1901, at least seven farmers were living on Massasoit Road. There were also a clerk, lighthouse keeper, laborer and a grocer. A provisions store was located on the corner of Oak and Massasoit Roads. By the twentieth century, the road had become an important way from Orleans through Eastham to Wellfleet. Seasonal residents had begun building summer homes and cottages by the Early Modern Period.

The dwelling at 75 Massasoit Road was constructed c. 1783 by Elkanah Higgins, the son of Ebenezer Higgins and a descendant of Richard Higgins, an original land grantee in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Elkanah may have been a veteran Revolutionary War.

The house site appears to be occupied on the 1831 Hales map. According to deed research completed in 1993 by Nancy Heller of the Eastham Historical Society and substantiated by the 1858 Walling map of Eastham, Elkanah's grandson, John W. Higgins (b. 1776; d. April 16, 1870), and his wife, Mary S. Higgins (d. February 11, 1874), were residents from approximately the 1840's until their deaths in the 1870's. John Higgins was a farmer who owned a barn, corn crib, outbuildings, fields and an orchard. Their children, Peter and Fannie K. Higgins, succeeded to the property after part of the land was

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES X See continuation sheet.

 Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places;
If checked, see attached National Register Criteria Statement form.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE (continued)

sold to pay debts. The property was transferred to Peter Higgins (d. March 6, 1916) in 1874 and is ascribed to him on the 1880 Walker map of Eastham. Peter was a Civil War Veteran, fisherman, farmer, town officer and a member of the lighthouse service from 1865 until 1869. Peter Higgins and his second wife, Phebe [sic.] E. (Burroughs) Higgins (b. March 25, 1851; d. March 4, 1894) both died intestate. Their sons, John W. and William B. Higgins (d. March 16, 1938), inherited the property. They may have been involved in raising asparagus like many other Eastham residents in the early twentieth century since a field on the property is known to have been put to that use.

The son of John W. Higgins, Raymond Higgins, an accountant, and his wife Claretta Higgins, a teacher, occupied the house from 1938 until 1978 when ownership transferred to their daughter, Sally Higgins Roberts.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (continued)

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*House File 75 Massasoit Road, Eastham Historical Society Archives.

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